



Profiles in Wellness



Judi G. Reid
Virginia

“What do you mean I have emphysema?” I asked the doctor, in shock.
“I’ve never been a smoker, there must be some mistake!”

It turns out that I did not have emphysema, but a lung disease called ‘Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency’.

So, once I’d received the official diagnosis of the real reason I was having difficulty breathing what were my choices? Many!

Every week, for the past 4 years, I have received an infusion of a drug to retard the deterioration of my lungs.

Recently, I participated in a pulmonary rehab program of exercising three times per week. I walk 30 minutes per day in the summer and eat healthy foods. Last year at the age of 61 I *walked* in the 8k race at the Richmond Marathon and experienced the thrill of crossing the finish line simultaneously with the first place *runner* of the marathon.

I have also had to do an ‘attitude adjustment’ from self-pity to gratitude. I’ve acknowledged the roller coaster of emotions that automatically accompanies a chronic disease but my faith in God and a desire to serve others keeps me focused on the needs and quality of life of others.